

May 5, 1999

2331 '99 MAY 18 P1:34

Commissioner Jane E. Henney
Parklawn Building, Rm. 14-71
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Reference: Request for Support of Irradiation Disclosure

Dear Commissioner Henney:

I would sincerely appreciate your support in the requirement of an irradiation disclosure on all foods, especially meat, that have been irradiated to eliminate harmful bacteria.

Since full disclosure labeling is standard currently, it would be prudent to allow the public to make their own informed choices concerning irradiated food purchases. By not notifying the American consumer that a food has been irradiated, an impression is created that suggests that there is fear that people will not choose the irradiated foods and that they must be forced to do so by omitting relevant disclosure labeling.

In the United States, people are not prohibited from buying alcohol and tobacco which are clearly harmful; therefore, it does not make sense to eliminate informed purchasing of foodstuffs that are harmful only if handled or cooked improperly.

Do you know of a publication or report that examines in depth all the ramifications of irradiation – both positive and negative? I know that certain vitamins are destroyed and that some harmful substances are created as a result of the irradiation process, but I have not yet seen a "white paper" on all aspects and their long term effects on the human body. I am assuming that this information exists and has been considered before proposing widespread irradiation of foodstuffs.

Sincerely



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